

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 3, 2025-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairperson Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

c. Moment of Silence Memory of Tony Siragusa

All stood and honored his memory.

d. Roll Call

Present was Chairperson Chuck Longton, Vice-Chair/Town Counselor Kevin Lathrop, Commissioners Frank Miceli and Deane Terry. Commissioner Richard Gladue was absent. A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Derek Albertson, Administrator Ronald McDaniel and Mayor Lenny Bunnell.

e. Alterations to the Agenda -- None

f. No Motion to approve Minutes of Regular Meeting (Sept Meeting-no quorum/Oct Meeting Canceled)

g. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission -- None

h. Remarks from the Public Regarding Items on the Agenda with a three-minute limit

Chairperson Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

i. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations Report for activities in October 2025, as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

The Montville Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) operates the federal and state permitted Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF)/Collection System and the Water Supply distribution system (WS).

WPCF treatment was good with state and federal permit effluent parameters met. No local or formal complaints were received regarding the collection system or the Montville WPCF. Average daily influent flow to the WPCF for the month was low (due to overall dry conditions), approximately 1.8 million gallons per day (mgd) (compared to 2.3 mgd in a typical year) with a total (influent) treatment volume of 58 mg for the month. No concerns were identified during the storm events during the weeks of October 6 and 13.

The month's waste activated sludge (WAS) was thickened (TWAS) to 6% total solids (TS) which is considered good due to volume reduction from dewatering.

1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required state and federal standards.

1.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

No injuries were reported by the WPCA staff. The staff continues to use daily “tailgate meetings” to identify hazards before work begins as well as to promote “situational awareness.”

Staff are reminded of hand-washing and other controls to prevent the spread of the flu, etc.

Tony Siragusa passed on October 9. Mr. Siragusa was a respected WPCA commissioner (as well as other commissions) within the Town of Montville. He made significant contributions to WPCA during his tenure.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training (state or professional organization sponsored) to meet the CTDEEP/CTDPH requirements as well as support additional related certifications. In-house education continues to be safety-based be it formal or informal training. Education is promoted within a “strengths-based model”- teaching staff to articulate not only what they're good at, but what they require for professional improvement. This practice builds mutual respect, clear expectations and stronger pathways for success.

October is *Cyber Security Awareness Month*. Staff were alerted (again) to potential dangers of phishing, etc. Appropriate in-house discussions were held to counter third-party interference within the WPCA.

2.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

Pre-storm readiness and post-storm inspections were made during the major storm events in October.

Public health, environmental compliance, and community trust all hinge on reliable, high-performance infrastructure. As such, the team considers process Intensification (PI) as an alternative for new construction; rather it stresses focused O & M as well as the enhancement, reuse or improvement of the existing infrastructure.

Minimal expansion to the original footprint of the facility and conveyance system is expected in the near future. The three concerns for the future include increased (wastewater) loading, more stringent regulatory controls and increased peak hydraulic/organic loading (due to climate change). Efficiency and real-time data are the keys to staying compliant with regulatory controls. The robust SCADA system allows for this.

Compared to 2024, the WPCF used 5.5% less overall chlorine during the 153 days of the 2025 (permit driven) disinfection season. Approximately 4,300 g less chlorine usage; saving money due to high waste removal efficiencies requiring less dosage.

Each day, over 50% of the treated effluent (non-potable) was recycled (sold) to Rand-Whitney Container Board (RWCB) which is currently using 100% recycle water for their production (the WPCA is required to supply up to 1.4 mgd, but averages 0.7 mgd return water). RWCB began their annual 5-day shutdown on October 6- significant demands on return water are made during shutdown to replenish production tank reservoirs.

In 2023, the WPCA replaced all the six tanks' air distribution systems (i.e. headers, diffusers) because they were over 25 years old (using grant and CIP monies). The concern is that there are multiple failures of delivery piping and connections. The engineer, installer and supplier were met onsite in September and October to define remedies to ensure the prescribed 20-year life expectancy.

Chesterfield PS was improved with prescribed upgrades per the FY CIP.

A significant amount of time/effort has been made to keep the Village Apartments PS operational. The tenants have no regard for appropriate use of the sewer and continue to clog the stations two pumps. While the labor (and equipment) costs are passed on to the managing agent, it is still

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unequitable and unsustainable for an asset that isn't even part of the WPCA. The Administrator have reached out to the new owner to remedy the situation.

4.0 Projects

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

A requirement of the CMOM directive, the annual CIP supports long-term solutions and addresses short-term needs. This year is the first year the water industry lists CIP financing as their number one issue of concern. A FY 2026 WPCF sewer/water CIP project summary table is included in the submittal.

The contact chamber was drained and cleaned. The sludge loading bay was cleaned out following a tanker spill on October 20.

CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television) sewer inspections (of a portion of the 62 miles gravity sewers) were made in the priority areas to define Inflow and Infiltration (storm water and groundwater intrusion). Routine maintenance inspections are made of all the 24 lift stations and 1,650 manholes. While jetting of sewer lines is made, when necessary, "flushing" is considered the best option for cleaning. Projected work for the year will show: 31,200 l.f. of cleaning, 10,000 l.f. of CCTV and 1,200 manhole inspections. All work is recorded within the GIS system. Along with condition assessments, the goal is reducing infiltration and inflow contributions to the influent flow to the WPCF. It is evident that the separations made in the conveyance system has reduced influent flow by 10% for 2025.

Solids handling (thickening/dewatering and hauling/disposal) is the second largest cost for the WPCA. On average, the WPCF generates 765,000 gallons of waste sludge are generated each month; 5 truck hauls for incineration. As such, the Superintendent routinely investigates improving dewater of the sludge to create lower (haul/disposal) volumes. Dewatering polymer bench and application trials were conducted in an attempt to lower polymer costs while not sacrificing sludge thickening.

An evaluation is made of monthly septage receiving to ensure there are no blind spots, including no unauthorized dumping, no lost revenues, no regulatory compliance risks, and minimal equipment strain from wipes, grease and chemicals.

To combat water loss from the (potable) water supply, the WPCA evaluates potential leaks and water loss (through a monthly water audit). Calculations of revenue water, non-revenue (accounted for) water versus non-revenue (unaccounted for) water.

As previously indicated, a replacement project was completed for Cook Water Tower.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

The Montville WPCF is required to meet state and federal standards for (point) effluent discharged to the Thames River per a NPDES (federal) permit and the (state general permit) for the *Long Island Sound Nutrient Reduction Program*. Additionally, the (state general permit) for the *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activity* regulates industrial facilities with point source (stormwater) discharges. Biosolids (laboratory analytical) reporting is summarized for the US EPA on an annual basis. Additionally, state and federal mandates (CMOM- *Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance*) exist for care of the sewer collection system.

Required (monthly, quarterly or annual) discharge reporting and emergency reporting are signed (certified) by the state-licensed CTDEEP *Operator IV* (Superintendent) in *Chief Operator Responsible Charge* of the designated *Class IV WPCF Facility*. The certification required for the collection system is from a professional organization (NEWEA, *New England Water Environment Association*). The Superintendent has the highest certification required (Class/Grade IV) for both treatment and collections. The Superintendent also has passed the highest certification exams for potable water, including Distribution System Operator (Class III) and Water Treatment Operator (Class IV).

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The existing 5-year federal wastewater discharge permit was effective on November 1, 2019. The current effluent permit has an expiration date of October 31, 2024; a renewal package was submitted to the CTDEEP prior April 30, as required (6 months prior to the expiration date).

The Superintendent is expected to receive CTDEEP feedback for the June 25 technical memorandum addressing a June 16 CTDEEP *Notice of Violation* (NOV No. WRMU 25-004).

The WPCF laboratory is participating in the annual quality assurance testing (DMR-QA Study 45). Established by the USEPA, the *Discharge Monitoring Report-Quality Assurance* (DMR-QA) program has played a pivotal role by rigorously verifying the accuracy of water quality data reported by laboratories, the program supports reliable environmental management and regulatory compliance.

The annual WPCF cost analysis for the nutrient reduction (general) permit was completed by the Superintendent. The reporting details all costs associated with WPCF nitrogen removal which assists in establishing the cost of nitrogen credits.

As indicated, the WPCF is required to meet the *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activity*. The CTDEEP is in the process of in the reissuance of the General Permit and is currently reviewing stakeholder feedback until September 30.

On October 8, Governor Ned Lamont declared a *Stage 2 Drought Advisory* for Fairfield, Middlesex and New Haven counties because of below normal precipitation levels. There are five stages in the Connecticut Drought Preparedness and Response Plan with one being the lowest and five being the most severe. Until Tuesday, all counties were listed in the state were at Stage 1, but the drought Stage will likely be extended to other counties. The Governor is encouraging voluntarily efforts be made to minimize the impact. The environmental stress has not affected the delivery to the WPCA. Information will be distributed to the local emergency management directors across the State thru the DEMHS Regional Emergency Management Coordinators for their situational awareness. The Superintendent is the Municipal Drought Coordinator for Montville.

Recently, the FBI discovered 200 utilities compromised by a Chinese state run hacking group. Typically, the third party takes advantage of a weakness in the firewall network to steal login credentials and masquerade as an employee. In Littleton, MA, a (potable) water treatment plant's SCADA controls were hijacked via remote access software with the intent to alter the water treatment process in a potentially dangerous manner. All computers used by water plant personnel were connected to the SCADA system and shared the same password for remote access and appeared to be connected directly to the Internet without any type of firewall protection installed. The FBI, DHS, and U.S. Secret Service as well as the CTDEEP and CTDPH have routinely mitigation measures to prevent third party intrusions. The mitigation actions suggested have been in place at the Montville WPCF (and collection system) and Water Supply since early 2021; (two-factor) authentication (2FA) service for all remote access accounts. Two-factor authentication (2FA), employs a one-time password that is received by the employee via text message or email to complete a login session making it difficult to utilize another user's credentials to gain unauthorized access.

5.0 Development

Several inquiries for potential residential development projects have been presented to the WPCA for review with the proposed work and connections to sewer/water.

6.0 Financial

The WPCA operates with an *Enterprise Fund* which is operated like a (private sector) business account except it contains a goal target of zero-balance (year) ending. Appropriate end-of-year accounting will identify areas whereas budgeting should be adjusted in future cycles.

6.1 Accounts Review

Asset management is the process for maintaining a desired level of customer service at the appropriate cost and lowering asset risk.

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The FY 2026 WPCA Sewer and Water Budget began on July 1, 2025. A cursory review FY 2025 budget/CIP expenditures did indicate immediate concerns. Future budget must develop appropriate AR to match proposed AP without tapping into the Fund Balance (as a source of revenue).

The FY 2026 budgets/CIPs were approved by the WPCA and the Town Council. The budgets began on July 1, 2025 and call for economic efficiency with the minimum resource consumption and maximum performance of the equipment required to supply potable water and treat the municipal sewerage. The budgets must establish appropriate funding for reliability of the utility.

A Montville sewer rate increase would increase revenues. Informal reviews of other town's rates show the Montville WPCA sewer rate to be approximately 40% lower than the current utility market.

A Montville WS rate was approved by the Town Council on May 12. The last time the WS rates were increased was via *Resolution 2014-50* (July 1, 2014).

6.2 Assets

The WPCA will continue to enhance its understanding of the WPCF and Water Supply assets with the permanent/inspection attributes positioned on the water and sewer GIS platforms. ArcGIS is the system of record for geospatial information and specific information of the utility assets. The ArcGIS platform is in a unique position: It is both a system of record (permanent and inspection attributes) and a system of engagement for the operator/mechanics.

As previously noted, the cost of depreciation is provided in utility spread sheets, but it is not an "out-of-pocket" expense.

6.3 Grants/Funding

Some current wastewater projects were funded by State funds including one grant (CTDEEP \$5 million *Grant-in-Aid for Sewage Treatment Facility Infrastructure Improvements and Upgrades at the Montville WPTF*- State Grant Agreement 2017-170491, approved via March 2014 Town of Montville Resolution No. 2014-25). The grant monies were used for infrastructure improvements within the plant including the new chlorine system, new recycling pumps, restoration of the influent flow distribution boxes and grit removal system. Additionally, the aeration systems for SBR-1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 were replaced. Vincenzo Gagliardi, Accountant for the CTDEEP Bureau of Central Services, funds for the grant have now been exhausted. Wright-Pierce was met to discuss future grant funding from the CTDEEP for collection system studies/projects.

One bond was paid in July 2018 and another was paid in February 2019; thus, reducing debt service by at least \$150,000-\$200,000 per year. The remaining two bonds will be paid in August 2032 (headworks upgrade) and July 2034 (new emergency power generator), respectively.

Based on a review of the WPCA's Eligibility Application the CTDPH DWS had determined that the Cook Water Tower replacement project was ready to proceed and that DWSRF funding will be available. A Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF No. 2024-7125) loan agreement package for \$1,360,332.50 was signed by the Mayor on August 30 for the *Cook Hill Tank Replacement Project* (CTDPH Agreement #2024-7125). The repayment is scheduled for a 20-year amortization with a 2% rate beginning on October 31.

A MTUA loan balance remains on the (not amortized) loan defined in the December 10, 2007 *Reimbursement Agreement by and between The Mohegan Tribal Utility Authority and Town of Montville*. The original principal of the note for extending the water utility into the Town was \$2,642,792. The current balance is around \$500,000 which is paid down when connection fees are collected.

6.4 Energy

The (electrical) energy is the single largest monthly WPCA expenditure. On average, the WPCF consumes 360,000 kWh per month.

Blowers can consume up to 60% of the wastewater treatment plant's total energy—and over 90% of the energy used in aeration. Between May 2024 and May 2025, the national average electricity

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rate jumped 6.5%—from 16.4¢/kWh to 17.5¢/kWh. Thus, the Administrator and the Superintendent are constantly looking at ways to optimize energy usage within your water treatment plant/collections system and water supply.

Electrical Energy is mostly supplied to the plant by the 460 kW Doosan Fuel Cell America, Inc. fuel cell (onsite generation by Unit #10587), Eversource (transmission) and First Point Power (generation). The power generation was formerly supplied by Constellation Energy. The WPCA is using less public grid kWhs due to this onsite generation. Typically, the Pure Cell (400 kW) unit is the best performing unit of its kind in Connecticut and provides over 90% of the energy required by the WPCF; thus, 90% of the electrical energy that does not have the higher transmission charge.

In March 2023, the Montville WPCA and Town signed a 20-year solar service agreement with N. Silver Brook, LLC- a Montville based renewable energy company. The agreement will save the Town of Montville more than \$850,000 and is structured for the town to receive the full savings amount within one year of the solar facility's completion. N. Silver Brook and its partners allocated solar energy from a Connecticut solar project in Naugatuck to the WPCA's electrical accounts. That project was selected as a winning bid in Connecticut's *Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions* (NRES) program. All of the WPCA's electrical usage was assigned to the winning bid and will result in lower energy costs. Hunter's Mountain #1 is undergoing an ecological study.

The WPCA personnel met with Garrett Cudgma of Resource LE to discuss battery (electrical energy) storage. *Battery Energy Storage Systems* (BESS) are technologies for the storage of electrical energy. It ensures consistent power availability amidst unpredictable energy supply due to factors such as weather changes and power outages and peak demand periods (BESS converts and stores electricity during off-peak times when electricity is more economical). It releases stored energy during peak demand, using components like rechargeable batteries, inverters for energy conversion, and sophisticated control software. This technology reduces reliance on costly peak-power plants, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and enhances grid stability. It also represents a CTDEEP requested "hardening" response to climate change

Superintendent Albertson reported that for six (6) months in a row the Plant has had very good process with the significant highlight being lower waste activated sludge volume with thickening in the last six (6) months at 5% - 6% equating to \$175,000 saved for trucking and disposal. Better process control equates to operators paying attention to thickening. Conditions were much drier for June, the sixth driest on record in Connecticut, instead of May for lower flow but still showing high removals for BOD and THS.

Superintendent Albertson highlighted his monthly report which was stated as a good month to the Commission with focus on statistics regarding removal, average daily influent, gallons per day, thickening and dewatering. Savings of \$7,000 was reported, an increased recycling rate to Rand-Whitney of approximately 50% and inspection on lines with 20% cleaned and 10% reviewed by camera.

j. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel submitted a monthly report of activities as of October 2025 as follows:

- (S) Kovacs Construction commenced work on the Chesterfield Pump Station and work is ongoing.
- (W) Cook Tower is operational and online. We have secured all necessary easements for Eversource, and new power is being scheduled.
- (S) We are continuing to review our sewer rates structure for comparable communities.
- (W&S) We continue to enter data into the GIS system for all aspects of our system. This is an invaluable tool for our staff and clients. We have also tested a new mapping tool that the Town has purchased called NEARMap.
- (S) Changes in the energy incentive arena have forced some suppliers to pull back from new energy saving initiatives. We have now met with Kinsley Energy for a potential battery storage project.
- (W&S) We continue to experience some administrative issues due to staffing but accounts receivable and payable are being processed in a timely manner.

- (S) SBRs 3 and 5 experienced air diffuser failures in the piping system due to poor material quality. We have secured an inventory of new couplings to replace faulty ones as they fail.
 - (W&S) We have received an inquiry from a potential developer for two parcels that are currently served by sewer but not water. While they are in our Exclusive Service Area (ESA) we have no water available nor are there any plans for such in the foreseeable future. SCWA is nearby and maybe able to service them, but we will need an official agreement in place and run it through the Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC).
- (S) = Sewer (W) = Water (W&S) = Water and Sewer

Administrator McDaniel reported that the Accountant retired and since the end of July have been limping along paying bills. Notice for the position will be advertised. It was noted that bank accounts are balanced but reconciliations cannot be done as passwords were not shared. The Administrator also reported that the Chesterfield Water Tower is 75% complete—pumps have to be fitted with online completion in two (2) weeks. Easements have been secured, Eversource is scheduled and the loan closing held last week.

k. Report from Mayor

Mayor Bunnell remarked on the difficulty of working without an accountant but making the best of a bad situation is being done. Congratulations were extended to the Plant operators and the Administrator regarding the Cook Water Tower. Administrator McDaniel noted that staff did a great job; Mayor Bunnell remarked it was an effort on behalf of everyone.

l. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reported on the events of the Notice of Violation received from DEEP this past June with a response submitted. It was received by DEEP followed by a response back with three (3) documents concerning requests for improvement, specifically improvement in wastewater in high water events. A meeting was held with the Engineer today followed by another meeting to plans together for process control.

m. Old Business -- None

n. New Business

1. Motion, Discussion, Roll Call to Consider and Act on the Election of a WPCA Vice Chairperson.

Discussion was had by Commissioner Lathrop if the vote for vice-chair should be held after the upcoming election to fill two (2) seats. Chairperson Longton remarked on the highly technical knowledge of technical skills considered by the Commission and its destruction going forward without a chairperson or vice-chair from the Town Council. Having been on the Commission for six (6) years, he noted the topics that come before the Commission that effect plants issues hence his preference to wait before voting. Commissioner Lathrop expressed interest in remaining on the Commission as its work has been informative, but he must be appointed by the Town Council. Mayor Bunnell directed Commissioner Lathrop to submit an application. Chairperson Longton reported that it took six (6) months for Commissioner Gladue to be seated.

Motion by Commissioner Lathrop, seconded by Commissioner Miceli, to table the election for Vice Chairperson of the WPCA to the December 2025 meeting of the Commission. Discussion: none. **Roll Call vote: *In favor: Chairperson Longton, Vice-Chairperson/Commissioner Lathrop, Commissioners Terry and Miceli. Opposed: none. Vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion Approved.***

o. Report/Referrals from Planning & Zoning

Chairperson Longton reported that a subsection at 25 Sharp Hill Road was continued to the November 18, 2025 Planning & Zoning meeting due to questions for engineers.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson reported satisfaction with lead/copper revisions with four (4) that require direct inspection. Administration is reviewing the remote dispensing of water. Software is used to detect water leaks after the meter.

b. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel reported receiving a call from a potential developer in the SCWA PSA and discussion will be had with them tomorrow. He noted that the WPCA cannot water there as part of economic development for the Town.

c. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson remarked that flushing is going and being concluded for the years. There were not reports of elevated levels nor were carcinogens found.

d. Old Business -- None

e. New Business -- None

f. Reports from SCWA

Chairperson Longton reported that SCWA now officially owns the water system at Oakdale Heights Association that had been pending for two (2) years.

III. Remarks

a. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute time limit

Chairperson Longton asked three (3) times for comments. There were none. Mayor Bunnell thanked Commissioners Lathrop and Miceli for their work on the Commission and hoped to see them back after the election.

b. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Lathrop remarked that he would apply for a seat on the Commission electronically stating that he has learned a lot. Chairperson Longton expressed thanks to Commissioner Lathrop and Commissioner Miceli.

c. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Terry; seconded by Commissioner Lathrop to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0. Meeting Adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN OF
UNDER “RESOURCES” ON THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**